



WEEKLY NEWS LETTER

THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL OF THE A. F. of L., BY INSTRUCTION OF ST. LOUIS CONVENTION, DIRECTED THE OFFICERS AT HEADQUARTERS TO FURNISH A WEEKLY NEWS LETTER, FREE OF COST, TO ALL OFFICIAL LABOR PUBLICATIONS.

Containing a brief summary of important matters, affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will further the development and progress of the trade union movement.

No. 57.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

HEADQUARTERS

801-809 G ST. N. W., WASHINGTON, D. C.

FRANK MORRISON, SECRETARY SAMUEL GOMPERS, PRESIDENT

DECISION IN STEAM FITTERS' CASE

Washington, May 4.--At the Atlanta convention of the American Federation of Labor the report submitted by the executive council recommended, after giving a brief history of the jurisdiction dispute between the United Association of Plumbers, Gas Fitters, Steam Fitters and Steam Fitters Helpers and the International Association of Steam and Hot Water Fitters and Helpers, "that the pipe fitting trade should be represented in the A. F. of L., also in the Building Trades Department, by one general association of the pipe fitting industry - the United Association of Plumbers, Gas Fitters, Steam Fitters and Steam Fitters' Helpers of the United States and Canada." It was further recommended "that the executive council of the A. F. of L. be instructed and the executive council of the Building Trades department be requested to carry this into effect." The Atlanta convention adopted this report. Following the convention conferences were held between the representatives of the organizations involved, with a view to securing amalgamation and putting into effect the action of the convention, but the International Association refused to accept the terms of amalgamation. The executive council then decided "that unless the amalgamation is agreed to by April 1, 1912, no payment of per capita tax or of any other character shall be received from the International Association of Steam and Hot Water Fitters and Helpers, and that the American Federation of Labor will on and after May 1, 1912, recognize but one organization of the pipe fitting industry, that being the United Association of Plumbers, Gas Fitters, Steam Fitters and Steam Fitters' Helpers of the United States and Canada." A circular letter has just been issued, in substance stating, "there is now but one organization of the pipe fitting industry recognized by the American Federation of Labor and its departments, namely, the United Association of Plumbers, Gas Fitters, Steam Fitters and Steam Fitters' Helpers of the United States and Canada, and all international and national unions, all state federations and city central bodies and all organized labor of America are, in the interest of the workers in the pipe fitting industry, the wage earners of the country and for a well ordered, self imposed discipline in our movement, requested and urged to aid by every means within their power to carry into effect the decision of the American labor movement in this case."

There are approximately 6,000,000 men employed in the world's mines and quarries, about 700,000 of whom are in the United States.

"ANTI-GAG" PROVISION ADOPTED

Washington, May 4.--The house has adopted a provision in the postoffice appropriation bill which will prevent the imposition of the "gag-rule" on employes in the postal service. The vote on this provision was 132 in favor and 1 against, the Republican minority leader, Mr. Mann, recording his vote in the negative. This provision will restore to the employes of the government their rights as citizens under the constitution and prohibit the promulgation of any executive order denying the right of postal employes of the government to appear before committees in congress or engage in other activities in securing increases in wages, shortening of hours, or redress of grievances. The American Federation of Labor is directly responsible for the insertion of this provision in the bill, and the postal employes, as well as all other employes of the government, if this provision is accepted by the senate, will be protected in their right to form labor unions affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. It is probable that the senate will accept this provision in the bill, and as it is an amendment to the postoffice appropriation bill, the president would be powerless to eliminate the provision except by vetoing the entire bill.

ADOPTS PARCELS POST PROVISION

Washington, May 4.--A provision in the postoffice appropriation bill provides for a limited parcels post to be operated only on rural routes. It restricts the delivery of packages to rural routes, but allows delivery from one route to another where the two routes center in the same postoffice. The rate agreed to is 5¢ for the first pound and 1¢ for each additional pound up to 11 pounds, this being the maximum weight that can be carried, and a general parcels post service of 12¢ a pound for 11 pounds is also provided. The rural route parcels post has been adopted as an experiment and a provision is incorporated in the bill to appoint a committee of three representatives and three senators to study all the bills that have been presented on the subject and present a report to the next session of congress.

INDUSTRIAL EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Washington, May 4.--The special committee appointed by the American Federation of Labor on industrial education will meet in Washington during the coming session of the executive council, which convenes on Thursday, May 9. There are now industrial education bills pending before congress, but as this subject is of such an important character, and requiring much deliberation and study, the bills have not as yet been perfected. It is especially desired that specific provisions be placed in the bill whereby the conduct of trade schools will redound to the benefit of those who desire to take advantage of them. No doubt the coming session of the special committee will suggest important additions in the bills now pending.

THREATEN STRIKE

Nashville, May 4.--Members of the Order of Railway Telegraphers on the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis railway are on the point of strike. President Perham of the O. R. T. and other officials, it is stated, have been met by a flat refusal of the officials to take under consideration the demands of the telegraphers.

AN IMPORTANT DECISION

Washington, May 4.--The Illinois supreme court has handed down an unanimous decision which destroys the theory of assumed risks. The court rejects the theory of "individual liberty." The court says: "The duty of the master has been changed. He may no longer conduct his business in his own way; he may no longer use such machinery and appliances as he chooses. The measure of his duty is no longer reasonable care to furnish a safe place and safe machinery and tools, but in addition to such reasonable care he must use in his business the means and methods required by the state. The law does not leave to his judgment the reasonableness of enclosing or protecting dangerous machinery, or permit him to expose to increased and unlawful dangers such of his employees as may be driven by force of circumstances to continue in his employ, rather than leave it and take chances of obtaining employment elsewhere under lawful conditions."

STREET CARMEN WIN

Seattle, May 4.--Organizer Sorensen of this city was successful in organizing the motormen and conductors of the Seattle, Renton and Southern railway, but the company immediately discharged ten men who had been active in the new organization, and their places were filled by non-union men. The union immediately took the matter up and prepared to call a general strike, when the company agreed to recognize the union and restore the old men to their jobs, and also to give free transportation to the families of the employees.

LONGSHOREMEN GET AGREEMENT

Cleveland, May 4.--The Great Lakes Towing company has signed a two year's contract with the Licensed Tugmen's association and the firemen and linesmen. The agreement calls for a monthly increase of \$3.71 for every tugman and \$3.00 for the firemen and linesmen. The agreement recognizes the union and provides for the employment of only members of the two crafts. The Great Lakes Towing Company is a part of the Lake Carriers' association and the agreement includes every port on the chain of lakes.

IMMIGRATION STATISTICS

Washington, May 4.--The bureau of immigration and naturalization has just issued its February immigration bulletin. The total number of immigrants admitted during that month totals 45,380. The largest number of immigrants from any one country come from southern Italy, being 6,889. The record then follows with Hebrew, 4,912; Polish, 4,248; German, 3,410; English, 2,502; Mexican, 2,137; Ruthenian 2,033; the balance being distributed between 32 different nationalities.

ACTIVITY IN FLORIDA

Jacksonville, May 4.--Organizer Terry of the American Federation of Labor has just organized a union of colored Sheet Metal Workers, and also a local organization of barbers. The labor movement in this city has taken on new life and the campaign of organization has now become contagious among all the local unions.

TEXTILE WORKERS WIN

Utica, N. Y., May 4.--In the settlement of the "hunger strike" at the New York mills, 3,500 textile workers have secured an increase in wages of 12½%, the establishment of a price list and other advantageous conditions, among them being the agreement of the companies to replace the old unsanitary dwellings with new ones and install modern conveniences in all company houses. The strike in the knitting mills is still on, but with indications pointing to a settlement in the not distant future. All strikers arrested during the contest have been discharged for want of evidence.

PLATE PRINTERS' NEWS

Washington, May 4.--Preparations for the convention of the International Steel and Copper Plate Printers of North America are in progress. The convention will be held in this city July 15 to 20. It is thought it will be necessary to lay off about 50 plate printers at the bureau of printing and engraving, owing to a shortage of funds, although it is stated that the treasury department has need for a large increase of paper money. The men to be let off are the temporary employees.

KANAWHA VALLEY STRIKE

Charleston, W. Va., May 4.--The strike of coal miners in the Kanawha valley is still effective, and the strike spirit is spreading to the contiguous non-union fields, and the operators are becoming alarmed. As a result of this unrest the operators of the Kanawha valley have signified their willingness to again open negotiations with the union miners. Indications are that the non-union miners are about ready to take definite action and strike to assist the union miners.

SECURE EIGHT-HOUR LAW

Jacksonville, May 4.--After a long contest the Central Trades and Labor Council of this city has succeeded in having the city council pass an ordinance fixing the hours of labor for all city employees at eight per day, the ordinance to take effect January 1, 1913. The theatrical benefit given by the Trades Council for the striking shopmen on the Harriman system was a success, and a neat sum will be forwarded to the strikers immediately.

CARPENTER INCREASES

Indianapolis, Ind., May 4.--The local union of Carpenters at Vinita, Okla., has secured an increase of 5¢ per hour, making the minimum wage in that city 45¢ per hour. The Carpenters in Danbury, Conn., also have secured an increase of 20¢ per day, making the minimum wage in that city \$3.20. These increases were secured without friction.

COMMISSION ON MINING

Washington, May 4.--Congressman Foster of Illinois of the committee on mines and mining, has reported out a bill, H. R. 22,842, to create a commission on mining industry, and it has been placed upon the calendar.

LABOR FORWARD MOVEMENT

Minneapolis, Minn., May 4.--The labor forward movement, now in full swing in this city, is proving to be an unqualified success. Meetings have been arranged in numerous halls in every part of the city for afternoon and evening of each day of the two weeks to be devoted to the forward movement, and practically all of the large International Unions have representatives here, and they are covering in their addresses every phase of the organized labor movement. There are a large number of business and church people, as well as unorganized workers, attending these meetings. In each meeting an opportunity is given to all those who desire to ask questions relative to the organized labor movement. Upon the conclusion of the campaign in this city a similar one will be inaugurated in St. Paul.

DEMAND SAFETY ON GREAT LAKES

Chicago, May 4.--Resolutions by the Lake Seamen's union have been adopted by the Chicago Federation of Labor demanding that legislation be enacted for the safety of passengers traveling in passenger carrying vessels on the great lakes. The resolutions specify that all companies operating passenger carrying steamers out of Chicago should be required to provide a sufficient number of life boats to accommodate the passenger list and crew in case of accident, and regular boat drills. It is further provided that 75 per cent of the deck crew shall be experienced seamen.

FOR COMPETENT SEAMEN

Washington, May 4.--Congressman Alexander of Missouri, chairman of the house committee on merchant marine and fisheries, has introduced a bill which, if enacted into law, will prevent a ship from going to sea without a sufficient number of trained seamen aboard to man every life boat. Congressman Berger of Wisconsin also introduced a bill proposing government ownership of all radio telegraph systems within the United States.

BROOMMAKERS GET INCREASE

Chicago, May 4.--Secretary C. T. Dolan of the Broommakers reports that the Walter Woods company of Hamilton, Ont., Canada, has granted an increase in wages of 40 cents per day, also that the Broommakers at Toronto, Canada, Colusa, Cal., have organized local unions.

DEMAND MORE PAY

New Haven, Conn., May 4.--A formal demand has been made by the clerks of the New York, New Haven and Hartford Railroad Company for a conference looking to a revision of schedules and an increase in salaries.

TAILORS IN GERMANY

Berlin, May 4.--Over 45,000 tailors in various parts of Germany who have been on strike for an increased wage, have won a victory carrying a 9 per cent increase, and have returned to work.

THE SENATE INSISTS

Washington, May 4.--By vote of 42 to 36 the senate has refused to recede from its amendment to the joint resolution providing for the direct election of senators. The senate conferees failed to reach an agreement and reconcile the differences between the house and the senate, and so reported to the senate. Thereupon, by the decisive vote above mentioned, the senate maintains its position. The amendment as proposed by the senate retains the right of congress to exercise a supervisory power over the time, manner and place of holding election of senators, whereas the house resolution, as passed, gives this power to the states. It is thought that the house will recede from its position and accept the senate amendment.

TEXTILE WORKERS ORGANIZING

Springfield, Mass., May 4.--The Polish speaking Textile Workers of Thorndyke, Mass., have organized a local union and have been granted a charter from the United Textile Workers of America. At Ware, Mass., also the English speaking mill workers recently organized a local union with a good membership. American Federation of Labor organizers are working in nearly all the mill towns in this state, and are meeting with splendid success.

BILL FOR THREE-CENT PIECES

Washington, May 4.--Senator Pomerene of Ohio has introduced a bill in the senate providing for the coinage of 3-cent pieces and one-half cent pieces. The motive behind the seeking of coinage of 3-cent pieces is the fact that in the city of Cleveland the street car fare is 3-cents and the citizens of Cleveland have urged the coinage of this subsidiary coin to facilitate payment of car fare.

BOOT AND SHOE WORKERS CONFERRING

Boston, May 4.--There have been recently conferences held between the representatives of the International Boot and Shoe Workers' union and representatives of an independent shoe workers' union with a view of amalgamation. The outlook appears promising for the independent organization affiliating with the International Boot and Shoe Workers' union attached to the American Federation of Labor.

PLANNING LABOR TEMPLE

Chicago, May 4.--Plans are under way for the building of a home for the labor unions in this city. Miss Mary McDowell has been selected as chairman of the labor temple committee of the Women's Trade Union League. Preliminary work is being done in securing statistics bearing upon the subject of labor temples in other cities.

SEATTLE TAILORS

Seattle, May 4.--The local Tailors' Union in this city has just signed up a number of shops on an eight hour basis, and have changed their system of work from piece to a weekly basis.

FEDERATION OF FEDERATIONS

Washington, May 4.--There was held in Kansas City, Mo., April 15-22, a convention of delegates representing the railroad shop trades. As a result of this meeting there has been formed what is called the Federation of Federations of Railway Employees. A constitution has been adopted and officials elected. The purpose of the organization is to secure unity of action among the system federations now in existence, and those hereafter to be formed. The platform states that the objections are: "One, to bring within this organization all railway employees; (2) to shorten the hours of labor to eight per day; (3) to establish a minimum wage scale for all employees in all branches of railway service; (4), to bring about a national agreement; and (5), to prevent strikes and lockouts wherever possible." The membership is to be confined to those organizations in direct affiliation with the American Federation of Labor. The executive council consists of the presidents of the national, international and brotherhood organizations which are affiliated with the Federation of Federations.

REACH AGREEMENT

Washington, May 4.--The Glass Bottle Blowers' Association and the American Flint Glass Workers' union on April 20 reached a satisfactory agreement with reference to the jurisdiction to be held by both organizations. A circular letter has been sent out, giving in detail the agreement. The agreement was reached by committees representing both organizations, and it is provided that in the event a dispute arises over the intent of the agreement or over the jurisdiction claimed by either association, the committees shall be reconvened to adjust the same, with the further provision that should an agreement not be reached by this joint committee a plan of arbitration is provided. The agreement is to remain in force until changed by mutual consent.

ANOTHER ANTI-INJUNCTION BILL REPORTED

Washington, May 4.--As stated in last week's letter, Chairman Wilson of the house labor committee favorably reported an injunction limitation bill to the house. Following that, the judiciary committee of the house favorably reported another injunction-limitation bill. This latter bill contains provisions which prevent the issuance of injunctions, either temporary or permanent, without previous notice to the parties to be enjoined, and without a hearing, except in certain cases. It also forbids blanket injunction. It is expected that a minority report will be filed by the republican members of the judiciary committee on this latter bill.

WILL GO TO ARBITRATION

New York, May 4.--The threatened strike of locomotive engineers of the 50 railroads east of Chicago has been averted by the signing of an arbitration agreement between the two committees representing the railroads and the engineers. The arbitration committee will consist of seven members, one from the railroad, one from the engineers and the other five to be appointed by the first two selected. If the two fail to agree on the five umpires, Chief Justice White, Commissioner of Labor Neil and Judge Knapp, commissioner of the United States Commerce Court, will be asked to make the appointments.

SEAMEN'S BILL REPORTED

Washington, May 4.--The house committee on merchant marine and fisheries, on April 25, ordered reported the Wilson bill, which proposes to abolish involuntary servitude among seamen in the merchant marine, and to prevent unskilled manning of American vessels. Since the Titanic disaster one provision has been added to this bill which requires that two experienced seamen be available on vessels to each life boat carried. This bill, of course, only extends so far as the federal government exercises jurisdiction. With the recent sea disaster in mind it is confidently believed that this measure will get an early consideration in the house of representatives.

CAULKERS AND SHIPWRIGHTS WIN

San Francisco, May 4.--The strike of the Caulkers and Shipwrights of the bay cities has ended in a complete victory for the strikers, the Master Shipwrights' Association conceding every demand of the union, including the union shop, eight hour day and a minimum wage of \$5. One thousand men have returned to work.

BOXMAKERS AND SAWYERS

St. Louis, Mo., May 4.--The local union of Boxmakers and Sawyers, formerly affiliated with the Amalgamated Wood Workers, and now attached to the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners, has been successful in securing the eight hour day and an increase in wages of 5%, with an agreement for a corresponding increase to follow next year.

FIREMEN GET RAISE

Denver, May 4.--Six hundred firemen on the Denver & Rio Grande Railroad have been granted an 8% increase in wages and a revision of their working schedule. Other matters relating to the schedule of the engineers and conductors were also satisfactorily adjusted.

TEXTILE UNIONS IN LAWRENCE

Lawrence, Mass., May 4.--There are now seven textile unions affiliated with the United Textile Workers of America in this city. They are all on a sound basis, both numerically and financially, and have instituted a strong textile council.

ASKING FOR READJUSTMENT

Boston, May 4.--The 500 telephone operators employed in the exchanges in this city and vicinity, recently organized, have requested the company to establish an eight hour day and a sliding scale of wages to go into effect immediately.

FOR SAFETY OF LIFE AT SEA

Washington, May 4.--Senator Ashurst of Arizona has introduced a bill which requires steamships and steam vessels leaving ports of the United States to provide adequate life saving apparatus and safeguards against accidents.

CAR STRIKE PROBABLY AVERTED

Pittsburg, May 4.--Danger of a street car strike that threatened to tie up the traffic in this city has probably been averted by the resumption of negotiations looking toward an amicable adjustment. The old wage agreement expired at midnight, April 30, but it has been agreed that the car service shall be maintained until further conferences are held.

URGE PORTO-RICAN CITIZENSHIP

Washington, May 4.--The American Federation of Labor sent a letter to every United States Senator, urging favorable action on the bill granting citizenship to the people of Porto Rico, maintaining that this action "will prove an initial step necessary to the uplifting of the hundreds of thousands of people on that island."

CASEY WINS

Washington, May 4.--John J. Casey of Wilkes-Barre, Pa., general organizer of the United Association of Plumbers, and also a member of the lower house of the Pennsylvania legislature at its 1907 session, has been nominated on the democratic ticket from the 11th district for congress.

ENGINEERS GRANTED INCREASE

Ottawa, Ont., May 4.--Locomotive Engineers on the Grand Trunk system in Canada and the United States have been granted an increase ranging from 9% to 11%, under a three-year agreement, the new wage scale dating back to April 1.

INVENTOR OF MASON JARS DEAD

St. Louis, Mo., May 4.--John Samuel, said to be the inventor of the mason jar, is dead at the age of 95 years. It is also stated that Samuel was the founder and first president of the Glass Blowers' union, and was born in Swansea, Wales.

CIGARMAKERS AND STOGIEMAKERS

Washington, May 4.--On May 3 representatives of the Cigarmakers' International union and the stenographers met in this city for the purpose of seeking some plan whereby the stogiemarkers can affiliate with the Cigarmakers' union.

PRESIDENT WHITE IN SERIOUS CONDITION

Washington, May 4.--A report comes to headquarters that President White of the United Mine Workers of America is in a serious physical condition as a result of hemorrhages caused by ruptured blood vessels.

LOUISIANA STATE FEDERATION ORGANIZED

New Orleans, May 4.--A state federation of labor has just been organized with a membership of twenty-seven unions. Action was taken applying for a charter from the American Federation of Labor.

ARIZONA ADOPTS RECALL

Washington, May 4.--A bill providing for the recall of the judiciary has passed both houses of the Arizona legislature with but two dissenting votes in the senate, and has been signed by the governor. This is in accordance with the wishes of the people of that state, and is the provision that Arizona had to consent to strike out of its constitution before President Taft would sign the bill admitting it to statehood, although it was known at the time that the acquiescence was hypocritical, and that exactly what has happened would happen.

REQUIRE TWO OPERATORS

Washington, May 4.--The senate has passed a bill requiring two or more wireless operators on every ocean-going vessel carrying 100 people, whether passengers or crew, an operator to be on duty at all times, and further requiring that the wireless apparatus be capable of transmitting and receiving messages from a radius of at least 100 miles. The bill was passed without discussion or a dissenting vote, and is to go into effect on July 1, 1912.

PROPOSED "EDUCATIONAL FUND"

Washington, May 4.--It is reported that at the recent convention of the American Newspaper Publishers' Association a proposal was discussed to raise an "educational fund" of \$1,000,000, this fund to be utilized to "collect statistics on the wages paid the typographical and allied labor unions throughout the country; their rules and regulations, the same to be tabulated, codified, printed and distributed among the publishers."

TO REGULATE WAGE DISPUTES

Washington, May 4.--Congressman Lenroot of Wisconsin has introduced a bill in the house providing that before any general reduction of wages of any one class of employees of a common carrier shall become effective employees shall be given the right to protest, and that the matter shall be referred to the interstate commerce commission for determination.

BROTHERHOOD OF RAILWAY CARMEN

Kansas City, Mo., May 4.--The Brotherhood of Railway Carmen has contributed to the members of the organization on strike on the Harriman lines Illinois Central and M. K. & T. over \$42,000 since the contest began. This is an excellent showing for the organization, and is a omen of final success.

INCREASED WAGES-SHORTER DAY

Brainerd, Minn., May 4.--The Electrical Workers employed by the Water and Light Board, a municipally owned plant, have just secured a reduction of one hour per day, making the working day nine hours, and an increase of 50¢ per day. This result was arrived at by amicable means.

IOWA FEDERATION RE-AFFILIATES

Washington, May 4.--The Iowa State Federation of Labor, whose charter was revoked in 1909 because of its refusal to comply with section 1, article XI of the constitution of the American Federation of Labor, has applied for reaffiliation. This state organization refused to comply with the constitution of the American Federation of Labor in the Electrical Workers' case, having recognized the seceding faction. The organization has now reversed its position, as well as has the central body of Sioux City, Iowa. The entire controversy is now cleared up in that state, all chartered bodies enforcing the constitution.

CONVENTION FOR IRON MOLDERS

Washington, May 4.--It is reported that the referendum vote taken by the membership of the International Molders' Union has resulted favorably on the question of holding a convention this year, and that it will be convened in Milwaukee. This organization usually holds conventions once in four years, if endorsed by a referendum vote. The last convention was held in Philadelphia in 1907.

HOME FOR INFIRM MEMBERS

Denver, May 4.--The Journeymen Cooks and Helpers' Union of this city has purchased a plot of ground with buildings for the purpose of establishing a home for its aged and infirm members. It is proposed that the inmates will assist in raising garden truck and other necessities for supplying the table and for market.

WANTS INFORMATION

Washington, May 4.--Congressman Good of Iowa has introduced a resolution calling on the postmaster general for information concerning un-worked mails, etc., and also another resolution directing the postmaster general to furnish information showing the hours of road duty of railway mail clerks.

GET GOOD AGREEMENT

San Francisco, May 4.--The Journeymen Stone Cutters' Union has secured an agreement with the contractors, expiring January 1, 1916, and providing for an advance of 60¢ per day from October 1 next, which will make the rate of pay \$5.60 for an eight hour day.

TYPOS GET AGREEMENT

Fargo, N. D., May 4.--The Fargo Typographical Union has just signed a contract with a local printing firm for five years which guarantees a substantial wage increase and arbitration of all grievances during the life of the agreement.

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL MEETING

Washington, May 4.--The executive council of the American Federation of Labor will convene in regular quarterly session on Thursday, May 9.